

## **Historic, Archive Document**

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.



R

1  
P698Me

LIBRARY  
RECEIVED

★ AUG 17 1957 ★

U. S. Department of Agriculture

Memorandum Re Narcissi of Washington  
Bulb Co., Congress Heights, D. C.,  
and Trial Bulbs at Cleveland Park,  
April 9, 1912, L. M. Estabrook.







the bulbs are so near the surface that it is probable many of them will be disturbed, and the bulbs are so close together in the row that it will be impracticable to clean them out with a hoe.

A liberal application of bone meal (50 lbs. to each 100 ft. of row) was made before planting, and a dressing of stable manure to serve as a mulch was applied in the early winter.

No attempt was made to rogue the varieties, and the stocks are becoming mixed. Without roguing, mixture is an inevitable result of lifting and shifting the location of varieties because of the volunteers which spring up. The extent to which volunteers will appear can be seen from the photographs herewith. One small plot of Emperors was dug last summer, and every bulb that could be found was removed. The plot was then sown in turnips, from which 25 bus. were harvested. This spring there is about one-third of a stand of volunteer bulbs on this plot which produced flowers. On the edge of another plot were 7 rows of Sir Watkin. The four outer rows were plowed up and the bulbs removed as thoroughly as possible. This spring there are enough volunteers to make a show, and in time they would undoubtedly fill the entire space. The 3 adjoining rows were set out three years ago and have never been cultivated. The weeds and grass have been allowed to completely cover the ground, and the bulbs have succumbed in the unequal contest.

I was told that from less than three fourths of an acre of Poeticus the Company cleared \$600 last season. From 7 rows of Emperor 150 ft. long, over 13,000 blossoms were picked yesterday (April 8), and I should judge there are ten times as many buds left. A colored man and woman and two boys were picking today. Last week 60,000 blossoms were sold to one dealer in the city, and 15,000 to another. Some shipments have been made this season to Philadelphia and New York, but most of the blossoms are sold through the Florists' Exchange on F St.

Only a few tulips were to be seen, probably not more than 1,000 in all. The collection of peonies and miscellaneous bulbs which were seen two years ago is not visible. The colored foreman, John Proctor, who showed me around said that the Washington Bulb Co. owned the lot on which the glass-house has been erected, but rents the field on which the bulbs are planted, and a small barn which is used for a packing-house and stable.

-----

After seeing the plants of the Washington Bulb Co., the colored foreman, John Proctor, took me to his house, which is about 3 squares northwest of the Congress Heights Post Office, and situated on the hill side at the edge of the flats which extend to Giesboro Point. Here he showed me a plot about 20 ft. square planted to Poeticus and Jonquils 14 years ago. The bulbs have never been cultivated or disturbed and have multiplied in dense clusters, so that the foliage is grass-like in appearance. He







4/10/12.

Memorandum Re Narcissi of Washington Bulb Co., Congress Heights, D.C., and Trial Bulbs at Cleveland Park, April 9, 1912, L.M. Estabrook.

The Washington Bulb Co. (Oscar D'Alcorn) has a glass-house (60' x 30') 2 squares south of the terminus of the Congress Heights trolley line, and about 3 acres in narcissus on the low ground at the foot of the hill, 3 squares farther south of the glass-house.

The glass-house was used this spring for forcing narcissus, the bulbs being placed in flats, of which 250 were used four times in succession, or a total of 1,000 boxes, which are 18" x 24", were brought to the flowering stage in the house and the blossoms sold in the local market. These were matured and sold before the bulbs in the field began to blossom. The glass-house is now used for packing blossoms and forcing tomatoes, plants of which are now 12 to 16 inches high.

For freshening the blossoms after being picked and tied in bundles of 25, wooden tanks 12 ft. long, 18 in. wide, and 12 in. deep, with cross pieces nailed on top to hold the blossoms upright and supplied with running water through a hose, were used.

The 3-acre field of narcissus is on low ground. The soil is a loamy clay, undrained and soggy. The following varieties are grown, which came into bloom in the order named:

1. Golden Spur (Mar. 29)
2. Emperor (April 1)
3. Empress (April 3)
4. Princeps
5. Sir Watkin.
6. Leedsii
7. Poeticus

About one third of the area has been planted one-year, two years and three years, and all blossomed. The foliage was healthy, the blossoms a little undersized but of good color and substance, with the stems very short. No sign of disease. Cultivation clean. Most of the planting is done in rather high beds four ft. apart, 18 in. wide on top, with 4 rows planted about 4 in. apart each way. The rows are about 150 ft. long. The middles are kept clean by plowing, and after the foliage dies down furrows are thrown over the beds so as to smother out the grass and weeds, and later are harrowed.

In a second method tried this season as an experiment, the bulbs were planted in rows about 9 in. apart, 4 in. apart in the row on a flat surface. The ground was pretty well covered with a growth of timothy, and after the blossoms are gathered a narrow-shovel plow will be run between the narrow rows. However,







says that his wife sells about \$25 worth of blossoms each year from this little lot. It is enclosed by a wire fence, and is used as a chicken-yard. The chickens keep the grass picked clean, and the ground is as hard as a road-bed.

-----

Trial Sets of Dutch Bulbs at Cleveland Park  
(Mr. J.E.W. Tracy, 2927 Macomb Street):

The collection consists of sets of ten of each lot of imported bulbs purchased for Congressional Distribution, and several varieties of narcissus and tulips from Bellingham, from Portsmouth, Va., and from Congress Heights, D.C. Of the narcissus only the Sir Watkin was in bloom, and they are excellent. The foliage of the Virginia-grown narcissus was the most vigorous, and the foliage of the Bellingham narcissus was tallest--at least one fourth taller than the foliage of the imported bulbs.

Of the tulips only the Bellingham bulbs were beginning to bloom. The Bellingham bulbs are free from disease, vigorous, true to name, with blossoms of good quality and substance, and stems ten inches high. The imported bulbs are still in bud and show signs of disease. The Virginia-grown tulips seem to be mixed or mislabelled. For instance, the set labelled Artus (red) has white blooms, possibly Pottebakker.

However, it is too soon to make a comparison of varieties. The blossoms look as if they would be at their best about April 15.

---ooo---





Bulb Farm of the Washington Bulb Company, Congress Heights, D.C.  
April 9, 1912.



No. 1. Field of Emperor Narcissus from which blossoms were pulled the previous day.



No. 2. H. Emperor volunteers from plot plowed up and sown to turnips in 1911.



No. 3. Poeticus, three-fourths acre, from which \$600.00 was said to have been realized from sale of flowers in 1911.







No. 4. N. Emperor, row of blossoms ready for picking.



No. 5. N. Emperor, showing buds which have blossomed over night after having been picked clean the previous day.



No. 6. Picking Narcissus blossoms for market.





Bulb Farm of the Washington Bulb Company, Congress Heights, D.C.  
April 9, 1912.



No. 7. Volunteer bulbs on four rows to left which were plowed up in 1911. Three near rows have never been cultivated.



No. 8. Narcissus planted flat in rows 9" apart.



No. 9. H. Pooticus in chicken yard of John Proctor, Congress Heights, fourteen years in the ground without cultivation.





April 9, 1912.



No. 10. Trial sets of Narcissus at Cleveland Park.  
(Mr. J. E. W. Tracy)



No. 11. Trial sets of tulips at Cleveland Park. Bulbs  
in bloom are from Bellingham.  
(Mr. J. E. W. Tracy)





Moyer.  
narcissi of Washington  
is Heights, D.C., ...  
Typewritten.


